REMARKS

This amendment is filed in response to the FINAL Office Action mailed on December 3, 2002 and in the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed on even date herewith. All objections and rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1-3, 9, 11, 12, 15-18, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29-32, and 44-110 are in the case.

Claims 52, 53, 61-66, 78 and 80-84 are allowed.

Claims 82, 83, and 84 were amended to better claim the invention.

Claims 97-110 were added to better claim the invention.

In the FINAL Office Action mailed on December 3, 2002, Applicant's claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) in view of Imai U. S. Patent No. 6,175,874.

The invention as set out in representative claim 97 comprises, in part:

> 97. A router for distributing packets in a network, the packets originate at a source and are routed to a destination, comprising:
>
> a plurality of route processing engines located within said router;
>
> ***a mechanism that performs a hashing function on at least a portion of network layer information in said packets, said information indicating said destination, said hashing function producing an indicia of a flow***; and
>
> a classification engine to switch packets with a same said indicia of a flow to a single route processing engine of said plurality of route processing engines.

Imai, cited in the FINAL Office Action mailed on December 3, 2002, discloses a system which uses a hash function to distribute packets, where all of the packets have the same destination address.

Applicant respectfully urges that Imai has no disclosure of Applicant's claimed novel ***a mechanism that performs a hashing function on at least a portion of network layer information in said packets, said information indicating said destination, said hashing function producing an indicia of a flow***. By all of his packets having the same destination address, Imai has no disclosure of Applicant's claimed invention, and is therefore legally precluded from anticipating Applicant's claimed invention under 35 U.S.C. 102.

Further, Imai teaches away from the present invention, as anyone of ordinary skill in the art following Imai's design would be led to believe that a hash function is limited to use in a central receiving station distributing packets to various servers, and would not be led to Applicant's claimed novel use of a hash function in a router. A router is an intermediate device in a computer network which forwards packets to a plurality of destination addresses, and is accordingly totally different from Imai's central receiving station which receives packets all having the same destination address. The difference between Applicant's claimed novel router and Imai's central receiving station is so great that a person of ordinary skill in the art would be led astray by Imai's teachings.

All independent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

All Dependent claims are believed to be dependent from allowable independent claims, and therefore in condition for allowance.

Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

The request for a one month's time extension fee is included herein. Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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The replacement for claim 82 resulted from the following changes

82. The [router] method as in claim 80, further comprising:

processing decompression as said specialized processing.

The replacement for claim 83 resulted from the following changes

83. The [router] method as in claim 80, further comprising:

processing encryption as said specialized processing.

The replacement for claim 84 resulted from the following changes

84. The [router] method as in claim 80, further comprising:

processing routing as said specialized processing.